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EMS AND ITS SUMMER VISITORS.

NEARLY every one nowadays has been to Ems, that pretty little German spa, so celebrated some years back for its gaming-tables, and now for its hot and cold mineral waters, and for having been, till within the last troublous year or two, a favourite summer resort of continental royalty. It seems needless to describe a place so universally known; yet, for the few who have passed their lives quietly at home and who do not know Ems, we would say a few words descriptive of its beauties. It is situated in the duchy of Nassau, in the valley of the Lahn. The village, which is long and straggling, lies on the banks of the river Lahn; precipitous rocks ascend behind the houses on one side, and these again are backed up by pine-covered hills; while on the opposite bank of the river, tall hills arise, clothed with trees from their summit down almost to the water's edge. Beautiful villas stud the foreground; and all along the river are pleasure-grounds and shady walks beneath acacia and walnut trees.

Many English people go there as early as May, in order to avoid the extreme heat and the crowded season, which is June and July. The heat then is undoubtedly oppressive; but the cool air of the early morning is always inviting for exercise; and one can during the day find shade and repose in the spacious lofty reading-rooms of the *Kurzaal*. The Act which after 1872 made gaming-tables unlawful, met with much approbation from the residents at Ems. Though to them the gaming-season was a golden harvest, the town being so crowded that the meanest lodging commanded a fabulous price, the winning gamblers recklessly spending their money in the purchase of jewels, dress, or anything they fancied for the time, and for which the merchants never failed to demand and receive large prices; yet we have frequently heard them declare they preferred to forego their gains, than have the place overrun by gamblers.

During the summer we spent, several years ago, at Ems, while at breakfast every morning at the

Vier Zeitung Hotel, the tall figure of the Russian Emperor strode past the window on his way to drink at the *kranken Brunnen* in the *Kurhaus*. He went quite unattended, save for the companionship of a large black retriever, of which he was very fond. To see him casually, one might think there were no Nihilists to be feared, that his life was easy and secure; but on a closer observation, if ever a face expressed 'Uneasy is the head that wears a crown,' that face is the Emperor Alexander's. There is something inexpressibly interesting about him. He is a noble-looking man, with the air of a sovereign; but his weary careworn expression could not fail to excite the warmest sympathy. Although going about Ems with such apparent confidence and security, the town was full of Russian detectives in plain clothes, keeping watch in every direction over the safety of their monarch. Notwithstanding their vigilance, however, some ill-disposed person struck the Emperor's pet black retriever a blow across the back, almost killing the poor animal; and for many days after this cowardly act he was unable to accompany his master in his morning walks.

There could be no greater contrast than that which the German Emperor presented to his nephew of Russia. Always going about amongst the people, jovial, good-humoured, and full of gay spirits, his subjects actually idolised the very ground he trod on. Wherever you saw the old gentleman walking along, with seldom more than one attendant, you saw every one start up to salute him, as if the sight was new, and with the warmth of their hearts beaming in their eyes; while he kept shaking his stick at them, requesting them to 'sit down; put on your hats; sit down.'

We well remember the first time we saw the German Emperor. Returning one day from a walk, we observed a crowd of people in the promenade, standing at a short distance from, and watching an elderly gentleman talking to a very pretty girl. The girl kept courtesying backwards, retreating a step each time. The Emperor William—for he it was—followed her up, making-

believe to bore a hole at her with his walking-stick. The whole scene had a most ludicrous effect, but was highly characteristic, and indicative of the friendliness that existed between him and his people.

Another day, a large party of schoolboys, headed by their master, arrived at Ems to spend a holiday. After exploring the town and drinking the waters, they came trooping along the covered colonnade which forms one side of the Restaurant Gardens, and which is itself lined with stalls belonging to the larger shops in the town. The Emperor walking quietly along in the opposite direction, accosted the foremost boys, saying: 'What brought you here, my lads?'

'We came to spend a holiday and to see the Emperor,' promptly replied their spokesman.

'To see the Emperor! Then have a good look at him!' rejoined the monarch, turning himself round back and front. 'I am the Emperor!' And forthwith he took the delighted boys to a book-stall close by, and presented each of them with a photograph of himself.

One morning there was considerable excitement at the *Vier Zeitung*, waiters rushing in all directions, and Herr Huyn our little host looking fussy and all-important. We inquired the cause, and were told that the Emperor was expected in the afternoon to call upon some ladies of high rank who were staying at the hotel. A huge roll of new carpet which had just been brought in was to be laid down on the grand staircase, and flowers were to be scattered in profusion everywhere. All the forenoon poor little Herr Huyn was in a pitiable state. He did not like to lay down his beautiful carpet, and have its freshness sullied by the numerous feet passing continually up and down the grand staircase; and yet he was in a considerable fright lest he might not have all ready in time when the Emperor should be seen approaching. Waiters acting as scouts were continually running in and out and peering up and down the street. It was a never-ending refrain of, 'Sister Anne, Sister Anne, do you see any one coming?' At last a horror-stricken waiter came rushing from the corridor above us, exclaiming: 'The Emperor is here! He is at this moment in the *salon* of Madame la Princesse!'

Herr Huyn stood aghast. 'How did he get there? When did he come?'

Alas! it was discovered that the Emperor coming quietly and unattended, had turned in at the entry to the baths, gone up an uncarpeted back staircase leading from the court, inquired his way from the astonished servant to the Princess's rooms, and so stolen a march on our poor crestfallen little host.

There was nothing now to be done but carry carpet and flowers round to the back staircase, and spread the one and scatter the others as rapidly as possible. This done, Herr Huyn kept guard at the foot of the stairs, still uneasy lest, through a combination of untoward circumstances, the Emperor might now make his exit by the front entrance, and so, after all, never know of the preparations made to do him honour. However, at last he was heard approaching, accompanied by the Princess. At once noticing the change, he inquired: 'For whom has all this trouble been gone to?'

'For you, sire!' returned little Herr Huyn reverently.

'Alas!' said the Emperor, 'it is a pity to leave such lovely flowers to be trodden on by an old man like me.' And stooping, he selected some of the most beautiful, and presented them to the Princess, and then fastened a blossom in his own coat. Such was the graceful acknowledgment he made to Herr Huyn, and by such simple acts did he daily endear himself to his people.

Prince and Princess Frederick-Charles with their daughters came one day to call upon the Emperors; amongst them was our own Duchess of Connaught. We recollect thinking how rude the people were, staring at the royal party as they sat sipping coffee in front of the *Kursaal*, each spoonful being eagerly watched from the time it left the cup until it disappeared down a princely throat. We too might have stared as earnestly, could we have foreseen that the slight graceful girl dressed in the palest shade of lilac, with a gauzy white bonnet, was to be in after-years one of England's daughters. Later in the afternoon they met the Emperor Alexander in the promenade; and after the interview, at which all Ems assisted at a distance, the Czar remained sitting alone on the *banquette* where he had been conversing with the Princess Frederick-Charles. Presently, out of the crowd and contrary to all etiquette came an old man, dressed very peculiarly in drab clothes, with knee-breeches and gaiters, a large muffler concealing much of his face, blue spectacles, and a broad-brimmed hat. He walked deliberately on until he came opposite to the Czar, stopped within a yard or less in front of His Majesty, and began thoroughly scrutinising him. He then went from side to side, looking at him from every aspect. The Emperor never moved a muscle. The crowd did not know whether to laugh or be indignant. Presently the old man moved off; but before going many paces, he returned, apparently not yet satisfied; and after again taking a side-view of the Czar, he actually walked round on the grass close behind him, and remained gazing at his back for more than a minute. Yet the Emperor never flinched, or made the least sign that shewed he was aware of his presence. And yet how unpleasant the position. The man might have been an assassin, his very peculiar dress simply a disguise. More daring attempts on life have been often made; for instance the shameful outrage which occurred in the Winter Gardens of St Petersburg so short a time since; and at all events, even to an ordinary individual it could not fail to give a disagreeable creeping sensation in the spinal marrow to feel that some one with unknown intentions was closely contemplating their back. However, curiosity appeared to have been the motive that prompted this old fellow's extraordinary behaviour; for having gazed his fill, he walked off, every now and then turning to take a parting look.

Never shall we forget the smile of mingled relief and amusement that overspread the Emperor's features as he turned to the people, who had been silent yet anxious spectators of the scene.

Many are the interesting and celebrated characters besides royalty to be met with at Ems. In a walk through that gay promenade, if you are fortunate enough to be with some intelligent foreigner, he will point out to you celebrities of all kinds, such as Herr Krupp, tall, stately, with his high forehead and intellectual face; the

rugged old commander-in-chief of the Cossacks, and his wild unkempt-looking son, whose names, celebrated though they be in the annals of Russian warfare, we could not attempt to pronounce, much less to spell; and the last new singer, come for rest, and to prove the virtue supposed to be possessed by the waters of Ems for strengthening the throat and chest. Every evening at the *Vier Zeitung* we used to enjoy the most delicious music from some Parisian Opera singers who were staying there. One in particular, a Madame C—, though rather *passé* as to her voice, afforded us much amusement. She was most anxious to make a youthful appearance, and her complexion was in itself a miracle of art; while she wore her hair, a lovely golden colour, in the most juvenile fashion, with a number of small ringlets across her forehead. One night at the theatre she was amongst the audience, when feeling the heat oppressive, she removed her veil. In doing so alas! the band of golden curls became entangled, and was removed also, exposing to view some coarse and grizzled hair; while to every one's infinite amusement, the yellow locks dangled for the rest of the evening on her shoulder; and she, unconscious, coquetted away with her cavalier—who was too polite to tell her—as if she had been a beautiful girl of sixteen.

Every one who goes abroad of course enjoys himself after his own fashion, and it is presumptuous in one to dictate to another; but one cannot help being struck with the fact all the same, that the English lose half the benefit of the complete change of ideas they might otherwise enjoy, if they could for the time leave behind them some of their intense insular respectability; and when they go to Rome, do as Rome does. They like to go to the hotels frequented by the English, because they think them more respectable, and because perhaps they get a few more of the luxuries they are used to at home; and no one can help remarking the sort of wet-blanket with which a number of English will envelop the *table-d'hôte* of an hotel mostly occupied by foreigners. During the meal, every one is dreadfully well-behaved, a few little commonplace platitudes only being exchanged; but when the English get up and retire, which they usually do with one accord, it is as if school-hour was over, tongues are loosed, and gaiety and merriment are the order of the day. At such places as Ems and the various bathing-springs abroad, acquaintances are easily formed. Even if they are not always unexceptionable, they serve to pass the time; and when you leave, you are not likely ever to meet your friends of the summer again. But even in this the English are so guarded, that they spoil their own enjoyment. We remember walking one evening with an English lady of large means and good position; a gentleman raised his hat to us.

'Who is that?' she inquired.

'Count L—,' we replied. 'He is a Russian, and attached to the Emperor's suite.'

'O dear, how provoking!' was her comment. 'I dropped my handkerchief the other day, and he stepped forward and picked it up, as it had fallen where I could not reach it. Next morning, when I met him, he raised his hat; but of course I looked another way, as we had not been introduced. I never dreamt he was Count L—.'

It seemed to us that our countrypeople were

always complaining of the dullness of Ems. We did not find it so. Our corner at the *table-d'hôte*, where the same party always met, was the gayest of those long tables. Flowers and fruit were every day found beside our breakfast-plate, the graceful morning gifts of our numerous foreign friends. Expeditions on foot, on mule-back or in carriages, were frequently on the *tapis*, and the evenings we shall always remember with pleasure. When unoccupied by theatre or opera or the amusing dances in the *Kursaal*, the walks through the perfumed gardens, often alight with fire-flies, the band playing soft music, the balmy air of the sweet summer night, a pleasant companion, and a desire to enjoy, without grumbling, the good gifts of this life as they came, made in all a combination so pleasant as not to be easily forgotten.

YOUNG LORD PENRITH.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—AT HOLLOW OAK STATION.

It was dark when Hugh Ashton, stepping from the second-class carriage in which he had travelled from London, alighted on the low brick platform of Hollow Oak Station. Only two or three other passengers got out there, and they were apparently natives of the place; for the porters in attendance greeted them with a growl and a nod, such as in agricultural districts pass current as a polite form of salutation to an acquaintance. But they looked at Hugh with some curiosity, as if marvelling who he might be; and when the steam whistle had sounded, and the train jarred and jolted itself again into motion, like some slow-moving stream of sluggish lava on a mountain side, the most intelligent of them touched his cap slightly, saying: 'Going anywhere, sir, near here?'

'No,' answered Hugh, smiling. 'I am going to stay where I am. You, I suppose, are the head-porter, and I daresay are in charge of the keys?'

'Our new station-master, sir? I thought as much,' said the man civilly, and again touching his official cap in recognition of his superior. 'I've got the keys handy, sir; and if you'll just step across'—

Under the porter's guidance, Hugh crossed the rails, and gained the little wooden platform, screened by the buildings of the station, which corresponded to the little brick platform on the down side. There was a sleepy air about the tiny booking-office, and the tinier waiting-room, and the very clock ticked drowsily, as if its constitution, town-made article though it was, had been affected by the somnolent influences of the place.

The station-master's house, of red brick, like the rest of the buildings, stood a little apart from the business part of the premises, and was trim and in good repair, as such edifices, the property of a wealthy Company, usually are. A creeper, the leafless tendrils of which looked withered and bare, but which waited for the touch of the vernal sun to put forth leaf and bud again, had been carefully trained over the front. The head-porter unlocked the door, and acted as cicerone in exhibiting the four rooms and a kitchen of which the tenement consisted. There

was furniture, of the sort that is put in by contract, and calculated, very properly, to be durable rather than ornamental. There were coals, and there were lamps, gas being, at Hollow Oak, a non-existent source of illumination. The porter bustled about to trim and light a lamp, and to kindle a fire in the chilled parlour grate.

'Mrs Waite—Mother Waite we call her, mostly—the old woman who did the work for the last station-master, who happened to be unmarried—I suppose like yourself, sir—lives hard by, at this end of the village. A respectable, tidy old soul she is, if you'd like me to give her a call in?'

Hugh thanked the man, who seemed to be a good specimen of the railway servant on his promotion, and expressed himself as willing to retain the services of the tidy Mrs Waite.

'I feel new and strange here,' he said. 'And a ship's deck has been more familiar to me, hitherto, than the plank platform of a railway station. Is there anything I ought to do, as a matter of duty, to-night?'

'Nothing worth mentioning, sir,' the porter said. 'It might be as well, for the sake of practice, to look out, and see all clear, when the night express goes by—and so with the up-mail. Never mind the heavy train at 9.45. I'll attend to that, as I have done this fortnight past, since Mr Weeks left. And then there's the locking-up. And that will be about all. But, since it's late, and there's nothing ready in the house, perhaps your best way, sir, would be to get a bit of supper at the *Beville Arms*.'

Hugh could not repress a slight start at the mention of the name. 'Why, *Beville Arms*?' he asked, in a tone of assumed carelessness.

'On account of my lord, sir,' returned the porter, with some surprise. 'I forgot,' he added, 'you were a stranger here. I mean my Lord Penrith. Most about here belongs to him, and you can see his grand house, Alfringham, on a clear day, from the ridge a mile off from where we stand. That's why it's the *Beville Arms*, sir.'

Hugh made no further remark, but quietly proceeded to take the porter's sensible advice, hiring the experienced Mrs Waite to undertake the charge of his modest housekeeping, ordering the inevitable mutton-chop and potatoes, which the neat public-house of the hamlet—over the door of which creaked the signboard painted with the Beville coat-of-arms—was competent to supply, and presently addressed himself to acquiring by examination of the printed rules and time-tables some knowledge of the duties that devolved upon him in his new capacity.

'How strange,' muttered Hugh to himself, when at length he laid his head upon the pillow of the make-shift bed which tidy Dame Waite had hastily prepared for him—'how strange that, of all places in the world, the hand of Fate should have led me *here*! The name of Hollow Oak Station at first suggested nothing to my memory or to my fancy. But Alfringham? Surely it cannot be for nothing that Mr Dicker's good-nature has consigned me to this out-of-the-way spot. Surely there must be something more than mere coincidence in the fact that I, of all men living, have been suddenly transferred to this place, of all places in the south of England. I feel as though I were groping and stumbling through darkness along a rugged road, and yet

with a vague confidence that I should reach the goal at last.'

By the first gleam of the cold gray winter's dawn, Hugh Ashton, an early riser always, as sailors and colonists commonly are, was astir. The station, when he emerged from his own little solitary dwelling, and stood alone on the platform, looked ghostly and cheerless enough; and yet, as the wintry sun struggled through the broken clouds, he could see that in summer at least the place must be lacking in few of the elements of silvan beauty. Even the deep cutting within sight had its steep banks thickly planted—perhaps through the care of some floricultural station-master departed—with rhododendrons, that in due season must carpet the slopes with gay colour. The country around was broken and undulating, and studded here and there with dark copses of holly and ash, or with clumps of fine trees—relics, it may be, of the primeval forest that Canute first, and William after, enlarged and meted out as a Royal Chase.

'I am glad, for more reasons than one, that I am here,' said Hugh to himself. 'My station would have pleased me less had it been among the fat pastures of Leicestershire, or perhaps among the bulrushes and endless windmills of the fen country in the far east.'

It was not, to all appearance, a very bustling career which lay before Hugh Ashton at Hollow Oak. Edmunds, the civil head-porter, who, as a native of the village, though a travelled one, felt bound to say a good word for the borders of the New Forest and all things thereunto appertaining, described the work to be done at Hugh's new station as easy in the extreme. 'Business hereabouts is slack,' he said, apologetically for the quiet that prevailed. 'But in truth, sir, there's never much of it. No mineral traffic, no manufactures, you see. A timber-train now and then, going to some dockyard, or a cattle-train bound for London, we may have; but that's about all.'

Everything was neat and orderly, on a small scale, at Hollow Oak. A slim striping in uniform sat in his narrow den, full of coils of copper wire, and clock-faces marked with cabalistic characters, and all the miscellaneous properties of a telegraph office, listening, so it seemed, as necromancers of old hearkened to the whisperings of some familiar demon, to the sharp click, click of the mystic little needles that trembled ever, stirred by the unseen subtle influence many a mile away. The porters went about their duty as demurely as though their business had lain in the starting—every axle tapped, and every flange examined—of the 'Flying Scotchman' or the 'Wild Irishman' on its rush of rocket-like swiftness, with a cargo of valuable lives, to Holyhead or Edinburgh. The ticket-clerk was but a boy, but sedate and smart; and the only confessed loungee was the green-coated railway policeman, who seemed to have nothing to do but to brighten his buttons and tighten his belt.

There was, after all, a queer resemblance between a station and a ship, which, after a little while, suggested itself to Hugh Ashton, and tended to reconcile him to his new duties. There was for the station-master the same round of routine cares, the same sense of daily and hourly responsibility, that there is for the captain. The

work might be a trifle more mechanical, the nerves were not braced by the sharp but wholesome tonic of sea-danger; but the similarity seemed to Hugh beyond dispute. He had his watches now to keep, on account of the night-trains, as he had done many a time at sea. He had even his own deck to walk, in the shape of a boarded platform which, however, was neither tight enough nor clean enough, through constant holystoning and the free use of broom and mop, to please a sailor's eye.

'He'll be a good station-master—better by long chalks than old Weeks—but somehow those seafaring chaps can turn their hands to most trades,' said Edmunds the porter, in the taproom of the *Beville Arms*. And here it may be noted that Edmunds, though a good head-porter, and hopeful of promotion, never expected to take such a leap up the ladder of advancement as to become in his own person a station-master. Such functionaries are commissioned officers in the Railway army; whereas porters are likely to rise no higher than does, in a parallel line of life, some sergeant-major, staff or regimental, who is respected in the service, and fairly well off, but who will rise no more.

There was leisure enough, Hugh found, at Hollow Oak. Highly salaried masters of important stations in great commercial centres might be half distracted by the incessant calls on their attention; but at that haven of repose the commandant of the little garrison of railway servants had time to ride a hobby of his own, be the same butterfly-hunting or pigeon-fancying, gardening or authorship. The country, as has been said, was pretty, and in parts wild, lying as it did on the confines of the New Forest.

'They call us Hollow Oak, Mr Ashton,' said the explanatory Edmunds, glad of a new listener, 'because of the Oak itself, five hundred yards, as the crow flies, from Hollow Oak churchyard, on the crest of the Ridge. There it stands, the grand old tree, a mere shell now; but a goodish lot of people could stand inside. It's been printed about, it has, in many books, and many learned gents come to see it. If it wasn't standing, as I daresay it was, when Julius Caesar came, I'll be sworn it was when Rufus came to die of the arrow. It's been hollow this many a year; but'—

'But what?' asked Hugh, as his informant hesitated.

'They do call it the Haunted Oak, as well,' answered Edmunds, dropping his voice. 'Anyhow, odd sounds are heard, and folks keep clear of it on a dark night.'

'Does not the Ridge, as you call it, on which the Oak stands, overlook the Bullbury Road?' asked Hugh suddenly.

'It does. You've read of it, sir, belike?' replied the porter.

'And is there not a place, between the Ridge and a brook, called—let me see—Calder Brook—a place called Lambert's Stile?'

'Murder Stile, we always call it now, sir, or else Bloody Stile, ever since one of my Lord Penrith's sons shot the other beside it, five-and-twenty years ago, or more.'

'I have heard the story,' answered Hugh calmly. 'When I have time, I will stroll out and see the place.'

CHAPTER XXXVII.—IN PERIL.

'This, then, must be the place where the fatal deed was done. It has been often in my thoughts—so often, that it is difficult to believe that these eyes of mine behold it for the first time.' So soliloquised Hugh Ashton, as he stood beside a stile giving access to a field across which a foot-path led, in the direction of the wooded Ridge. Behind him was the narrow country road leading, as a moss-grown old finger-post declared, to Bullbury, Mepham, and Greenend. The field through which the path wound was rush-grown pasture-land, shut in by a huge thorny hedge and tall bank overgrown with giant fern. The stile itself was, to look upon, merely an ugly hog-backed stile, of brown oak, with stepping-stones worn with age and use, and which would have been voted an awkward obstacle by even the most intrepid of fox-hunters. Such as it was, Hugh Ashton stood gazing at it long and fixedly.

'Lambert's Stile!' said a little crowboy, who now came past, in answer to an inquiry on Hugh's part. 'Not as I knows on, master. Bloody Stile, this one is.' And the urchin went slowly back from his dinner to his work, without manifesting any inquisitiveness as to Hugh himself, or the motive of his question.

Hugh Ashton drew a deep breath, and surveyed the spot as if resolved to imprint every local detail indelibly upon his memory. 'From behind yonder hedge,' he said, 'tall, and old, and fern-grown, doubtless, even a quarter of a century ago, the fatal shot was fired. There, no doubt, the assassin crouched amid the fern and brambles, awaiting the coming of his victim. I can fancy Marmaduke Beville, wilful, headstrong, careless of danger, advancing along the path without a thought of the violent death that was so near. It was sudden, terribly sudden! I can see the flash of the gun, and see the blue smoke curl upwards from amidst the fern, and the man that fired the shot— Ah! if I could but drag him to justice, in the open light of day, and right the cruel wrong that has endured so long, and wrecked a nobler life than his who died that day!'

There seemed to be a hideous fascination about the ill-omened spot, for it was difficult for Hugh to tear himself away. He did not actually, however, cross the stile or strike into the footpath, but avoided both with an involuntary repugnance that his reason could not conquer. He went on along the Bullbury Road for some distance, until at last he reached a narrow lane, bordered by ragged hedges, which evidently led towards the Ridge. A few minutes of brisk walking brought him to the verge of a belt of woodland, through which a track, available for foot-passengers, led. Hugh struck into this path; and presently emerged upon the very crest of the Ridge itself, a long chain of low hills, wooded yet as to its sides, but on the highest portion of which the trees had fallen beneath the axe, leaving but a tangled mass of shrubs and brushwood, where once the towering elm and spreading beech had lifted their proud heads sunwards.

Hugh took a steady survey of the wintry landscape, new to him, yet by report so strangely familiar! He could have made a shrewd guess at the real names of more than one of the landmarks, unseen before, that met his gaze. That

clump of fir-trees, rising black against the sky, must be Scranny Holt, famous for its fox-earths; and yonder waste Cheam Common, where a battle had taken place between Royalists and Round-heads early in the Civil War. And that grand house, on whose many windows the sun threw a gleam of pale gold, standing amongst hereditary oaks of mighty growth, with its park stretching miles away, and its mass of buildings suggesting the proportions less of a mansion than of a palace, could be no other than stately Alfringham.

Alfringham! Hugh's heart beat high for a moment, and his eyes glistened as he caught the first glimpse of the majestic pile of which he had heard so much, beneath very different skies, and in the midst of a very different vegetation, from those on which he now looked.

'And to think that a word from me would'—Thus much he said; but he did not complete the sentence, and with a cold, proud smile, turned away. He did not throw another glance towards magnificent Alfringham, but rambled on, nearer and nearer to where, like a wall, rose up on the horizon's edge the girdling belt of trees that marked the edge of the Forest. It was a desolate, but in some respects not an uninviting landscape on which he looked. He had turned his back on the fertile vale reaching to Bullbury and far beyond, which formed the most profitable portion of Lord Penrith's estate, and what he saw before him was a wild and picturesque tract, where half-savage herds of ponies cropped the short herbage of some heath; or peat-cutters could be distinguished far away plying their trade beside a swamp, reed-crested; where patches of woodland were frequent, and very indeed the thatched roofs and wreaths of smoke that indicated human abodes.

More and more did the country resemble a wilderness as Hugh Ashton approached the boundary of the Royal Chase. There had fallen on the previous night a sprinkling of snow, which on the upland remained, unthawed by the pale sun, and cracked crisply beneath his feet as he advanced, pushing his way through stunted heather and lofty fern, until, from a neighbouring thicket of underwood, overtopped by three or four old trees that the lopping axe had spared, the smothered sound of voices reached his ear. He pressed on, pushing aside the nut-boughs as he came forward, and burst into a clearing almost entirely shut in by bushes and golden-blossomed gorse, and there beheld an unaccustomed sight. On the ground, its sinewy limbs entangled in a net, lay a noble stag, gasping, and feebly struggling still to rise, while the blood streamed fast from its throat. Over the prostrate animal knelt two swarthy fellows, whose olive skins, long hair, and glittering black eyes left no doubt as to their caste, one of whom was firmly grasping the antlers of the dying stag, while the other held in his hand a curious sort of a knife, with a broad blade and a carved handle. Two others of the tribe who, leaning against the trunk of a scathed wych-elm, were surveying with much interest the proceedings of their brethren, started, as they heard the dry leaves and snow crackle beneath Hugh's step.

'A spy! a spy!' they exclaimed. 'Ware! Ishmael!' And the man with the knife turned his head and saw Hugh Ashton within a few feet of him.

'So much the worse for the Busne, if he's alone!' muttered Ishmael, scrambling up and clutching the knife more firmly.

Hugh took in the situation—none of the pleasantest, it must be admitted—at a glance. The sight of the deer—escaped no doubt from the limits of the Royal Forest, if indeed those boundaries did not include the place on which he stood—lying on the ground, of the gipsy crew around, of the net and the knife, told its own tale. The wanderers had been busy in securing to themselves, as dwellers in and near the New Forest were till recently wont to do, an illicit share of those rights of vert and venison which are by statute and common law the exclusive property of the Crown. And there was no mistaking the character of the unfriendly glances which those whom he had disturbed in the course of their poaching transaction threw towards him, the intruder on a region which they probably considered as their own hunting-ground.

'Come, come!' Hugh called out in his clear deep voice; 'I am no keeper, my lads, or ranger, whichever they call it, so I have no wish to interfere with you, unless—Ah, my fine fellow, I can't stand that!' he added, less amicably, as a lithe, long-haired stripling, the youngest of the group, stole round and aimed a blow at Hugh's head with the butt-end of a rusty and short-barrelled gun. And before the young gipsy could repeat the stroke, cleverly eluded, the gun was wrenched from his grasp, and that with a force that sent him staggering into the midst of his friends. Ishmael, who seemed the strongest and most resolute of the party, came forward, knife in hand. The others clutched their heavy sticks. One and all had the aspect of wild-cats brought to bay. A male gipsy, as many of us can avouch, is apt to present a singular example of how a savage nature can be kept in check by the constant presence of a civilisation that it abhors and rejects. He is sometimes sullen, not seldom orientally abject in his attempts to please. He is useful too in a spasmodic way, and will get through a job of work, if mending be required, with a patient deftness that regular European workmen do not equal. But you can never quite trust him, and you never know when the vindictive spirit of his lawless ancestors may make itself felt. These gipsies, caught red-handed beside a slain deer, were desperate.

'There's nothing in the gun!' exclaimed the man who was called Ishmael; 'rush the Gorgio!' And he himself set the example by bounding forward, flourishing his knife. To Hugh, the information that the piece which he had captured was unloaded, was an unwelcome one; but he clubbed the gun, and setting his back against a tree, prepared for the worst. The fiercest, as well as the strongest, of the long-haired crew was plainly Ishmael, who now commenced the attack, brandishing the knife with which he had despatched the deer. But Hugh had had to do with those who trusted to such weapons before that day; and he had Ishmael by the wrist, and had struck the knife out of his hand, before the gipsy could well realise the fact that he had met with more than his match. The others, however, were closing in, and the unequal scuffle could not have been long sustained, had not a weird female form flitted, spectral, from behind the trees, uttering

words in a strange tongue, the sound of which produced an instant effect upon the gipsies, for they suspended their attack as though spell-bound.

Hugh had not much difficulty in recognising his rescuer. It was Ghost Nan, the wild, roving mendicant whom he had seen in Cornwall, and for whom he had hitherto sought in vain—the half-crazed gipsy who had threatened and alarmed Maud Stanhope within rifle-shot of Lady Larpent's gates. She stepped forward now, with the air and bearing of a queen, between Hugh and his scowling assailants.

'Lay not a finger on the Gorgio!' she said. 'Seek not to harm a hair of his head, a shred of his garments, unless ye would have the hand ye lift dry and wither, and the eyes grow dim, and the feet pine and perish and grow feeble and frail, within the stone walls of Dorchester Jail. He is charmed, fools! charmed from hurt or ill, until his allotted task be done! Think ye, but for that, that he would ever have come here?'

The words were strange and fraught with mystic meaning, or a madwoman's frantic fancies, as the listeners chose to take them. There was no doubt as to the impression produced upon the gipsies around. They laid aside their threatening aspect, lowered the bludgeons which had been brandished menacingly enough, and slunk off, one by one, like wolves surprised by the daylight in the outskirts of a town. Hugh remained alone, beside the dead stag, confronting the singular woman who had come between him and his foes.

'I have wished to see you more than once,' said Hugh earnestly, 'dame, since you and I met at Treport. You seemed then to fancy that you knew me.'

'I took you for your father!' answered Ghost Nan, with a grim laugh. 'Once you scared me, young man, but now I know better. You cannot call the dead to life, can you? Even I cannot do that!' she added frantically.

Hugh thought that he saw the gleam of insanity in the haggard eyes that this strange woman fixed upon his face.

'If you can,' resumed the gipsy, after a pause, 'go down to Bloody Stile, where I saw you stand to-day, and try your power! Marmaduke Beville, he that died there, and left the place its evil name, should surely rise, if the dead can rise, at your command. Or perhaps the heavy marble of his tomb, the heavy lead of his coffin, may keep him down, ha, ha! and make him deaf to your voice. I saw the funeral pass down the park at Alfringham, a goodly show—and I bethought me of how still and low he lay, on the grass, among the nettles and the kingfern!'

'Woman, you madden me! For heaven's sake, you who know so much, tell me, do you know all? Were you present, or near to the accursed spot, when the foul deed was done? And if so, who was the treacherous villain who contrived to fling the blame of his coward crime upon one innocent, who?—'

'Ha, ha! son of the Red Hand!' interrupted Ghost Nan, with her shrill, ghastly laugh; 'would you fain bring a murderer's neck at last to the hempen cord that has long been waiting? Well—it is your star has drawn you here; and if your star prevail over his, the truth may yet be known. Meet me, if you will, beside the

Hollow Oak, at moonrise, on the third night from this.'

'I will not fail,' said Hugh; but already Ghost Nan had glided away, as if she had been a ghost indeed, and was lost among the trees and bushes; while Hugh, with a throbbing heart and busy brain, walked back to the scene of his new duties at the railway station under his charge.

(To be continued.)

EAST-END EXPERIENCES.

WINTER, which has had such a persistent reign this year, has been productive of terrible scenes of pinching cold and destitution in some parts of the east end of the metropolis. The casual wards of the workhouses were every night filled of course to repletion; and despite the severe weather, the number of persons of either sex who were compelled to walk the streets every night in default of a lodging was heart-rending.

Let us see how these people exist with no employment, with everything going out, and nothing coming in. Exist they certainly do by some incomprehensible process. Let us visit one or two of them in the hovels where they reside, merely premising that a decently dressed person is seldom allowed to take such a liberty with them. Being confident, however, that we shall be welcomed, we dive down a narrow court, through the half-open door of a miserable two-storied house, in a locality where, but that we happen to be acquainted with the occupant, we would not care much to venture by day, and in which we certainly would not be found at night. Up-stairs, unannounced we come to the room occupied by Mr King, a short, shrivelled-up old man of sixty-five, but who earns a good deal of money at the wharfs and docks in the summer. Mr King's room is his castle, and from it he carefully excludes such city missionaries or district visitors as care to venture near him, even when he is in the greatest distress. But if anybody knows him at his work, or is say his foreman or 'ganger,' Mr King will open the door to him immediately. Entering, we perceive him squatting on the apology for a bed that lies on the floor beside a scrap of fire, his face resting in his hands; while opposite him, in a backless chair, sits a young gentleman chewing a piece of string, and fancying it is tobacco. We recognise them both, and are saluted with a 'Well, captain!' simultaneously. Mr King's *vis-à-vis* has a name of course, but we never knew it, for he is known only by the *sobriquet* of 'Taters' by everybody. The room is plentifully hung with some rather tattered linen in a dubious state of cleanliness, and this is some 'family washing' which Mr King's wife takes in, and is at present completing, iron in hand. Amidst the steaming linen we take a seat in the backless chair, the oscillatory movements of which we are constantly compelled to steady with our legs, the polite 'Taters' in the meanwhile taking a seat on the bed beside Mr King. Well! how have things been going with him? Oh, very bad indeed! no work, not a stroke for the last

six weeks. Yesterday, all he and the 'old woman' had was half a quartern of bread; and he gave a piece of that to 'Taters,' who had called to beg some, as he had not broken his fast for twenty-four hours.

They have had no breakfast this morning, and it is now ten o'clock, and they were both too faint to go out and look for work. What Mr King now lives upon is what the 'old woman' gets by washing, but there is scarcely any of that to be had; and he should not have been so badly off, only the landlord of the public-house where his 'money club' was held, ran away, and so he lost about four pounds he had saved in the summer.—Then why did he not put his money in the Post-office Savings-bank? Oh, too much humbug and bother about that.—Had he applied to the parish for any relief? Well, he thought we had more sense than to ask him such a question as that. We knew very well that unless he went into the 'house' altogether, all he could get would be a meal of food for himself in return for a task of stone-breaking, but he could bring none of his earnings home. As for 'Taters,' he was a single man, and had no business to come sponging on Mr King; but that was like him, for he always spent his money at the public-house when he had any.—Did Mr King owe any rent? Yes; he owed ever so much, and was besides in debt at the baker's and grocer's nearly two pounds.

Honoured as we were by admittance to Mr King's domicile, we felt constrained to offer him a couple of shillings by way of loan, a sum he would have rejected, had it been offered as a gift by his parish clergyman. Smilingly and with eyes dilated, Mr King takes the coin, and at once hurries off, returning shortly with some bread and cheese, tea and tobacco. The tobacco, singularly enough, is attacked first with wolfish ferocity; and the pair having feasted on the bread, express their conviction that 'the captain is not a bad sort after all.' The meal half-finished, we startle them with the intelligence—which we have purposely till now withheld—that the ship *Gamboola* is going up to dock with forty-five thousand bags to land. Up they start as if struck by an electric shock, and with a 'Good luck to you for the news, captain!' hastily pocket the remainder of the bread and tobacco, and scuttle away down the stairs as fast as their legs can carry them. Left alone with the 'old woman,' we extract from that lady that her husband is stupid, and stands very much in his own light; but that for her part she is not so squeamish, frequently obtaining, unknown to him, tickets for bread and coal from the charitable.

Bad as things were with Mr King, there were a few cases where they were worse—cases of families huddling together in a state of starvation and semi-nudity; but such instances were not numerous, as the poor readily assist each other, and but few deaths occurred during the winter from actual want. Passing along a large thoroughfare one bitterly cold night, we were accosted by a respectable, though shabbily dressed man, who with husky voice implored us to purchase of him a small pocket-knife to enable him to pay for a lodging. He was a professor of languages, and an excellent musician to boot, but had walked the streets three nights consecutively,

picking up by day a crust of bread occasionally from some charitable baker. The knife became our property; and with the purchase we threw in a few hints for his guidance, which we are glad to say proved useful, as when we met him about three weeks afterwards, he informed us that his circumstances had slightly improved.

Along the wide expanse of the Mile End Road we find some large Assembly Halls abutting upon the main thoroughfare, where evangelistic services are constantly held all the year round, interspersed with lectures, magic-lantern exhibitions, and other entertainments likely to interest the masses of the people. The most commodious and useful of these is one erected by the promoters of the Tower Hamlets mission; and here there is every variety of preacher, from the Oxford man down to the converted pugilist. During the severest part of the winter, a gentleman connected with the mission voluntarily distributed some bread to a few who were in need; and in the course of a few days the number of applicants had increased so much, that the hall, capable of accommodating about fifteen hundred people, was transformed into a 'draw,' being filled three evenings every week by a hungry crowd of men, women, and children, each of whom received a large piece of bread and a pint of cocoa; the money to provide which was chiefly supplied by readers of some of the morning papers. Edging our way among the crowd on one or two occasions, we saw that the applicants were unmistakably in need; a great many, however, being those who always are upon the fringe of the labour market, and constantly standing on the brink of starvation. On subsequently questioning a number of poor fellows as to whether they had visited the hall and accepted relief, their reply was invariably in the negative. They were afraid that if they had done so it would have reached the ears of their 'mates,' and they would never have heard the last of it.

Thrifless while labour is plentiful, how can such people be assisted? They abhor the parish, though directly or indirectly they pay rates, and they will not have charitable people prying into their homes with bread-tickets. The method of reaching them is a secret. Over and over again have clergymen and others complained to us that they cannot 'get at' the working classes. Certainly not, for they will not let the working classes 'get' into their drawing-rooms to shock them with their vulgarity. Neither do the working classes wish to intrude there. But if any clergyman in his youth has learned some handicraft trade, and can shew them that he can handle a chisel or wheel a truck as well as themselves, he will be received with open arms and more than deference. The working classes hold *laborare est orare* in all its inflexibility, and in their eyes no labour but hand-labour has any value. Your brains may certainly be necessary to guide, arrange, and plan, still they argue that without their handiwork, brains would be at a discount. Hence, when they are in distress, they will not trouble 'brains' to assist them. But from any one who is as competent with the hands as themselves they will gladly receive assistance; and it surely might be possible to arrange on a future emergency that foremen and others who are acquainted with deserving cases should have the means of distrib-

uting a few shillings weekly all round until the bad time be tided over. The money could readily be found, and—treated by the recipients as a loan to be repaid when better times should come—would be carefully expended; the only difficulty would be in finding a suitable method for its distribution.

So long, however, as thriftlessness during good times rules rampant, and money that ought to be laid aside is squandered in dissipation, so long will want and misery prevail when dull times come. If the working-man could be taught that what he makes while the sun is shining *must*, in part, serve for the exigencies of the rainy day, there would be less of periodical starvation in the country.

EPISODES IN THE 'LIFE OF A BOW-STREET OFFICER.

A WELSH ADVENTURE.

AMONG my other experiences of life, it has been my lot to hold the position of sergeant in the metropolitan police force. I was stationed at Bow Street, and was one of a very small number of officers to whom was delegated the duty of attending at those prisons throughout the country where it was necessary to re-apprehend criminals about to be discharged, but against whom warrants were issued from the Home Office on account of them being 'wanted' to answer for other misdeeds. The task, as may be readily imagined, was sometimes one of no small danger; and a brisk and active life we led at all times, for there was work enough to keep us pretty well always on the move. It was a life of excitement, and not without attraction for those who were possessed of an adventurous spirit, such as I fancied I did possess in a very great degree at that period of my life.

One day I had a summons to the presence of the chief magistrate, who put into my hands a warrant that would take me down to the heart of a mining locality somewhere in Wales. I purposely avoid being more definite. From inquiries that I made I learned that the individual whom it would be my duty to bring up to London was a criminal of considerable notoriety, whose presence was most particularly in request, on account of some flagrant misdeeds that the authorities could on no account overlook. I also ascertained that he was a powerful and rather desperate character, and that I need not count on the capture being an easy one. But I knew that in case of need I could arrange with the prison authorities for assistance, and that if I once got the 'darbies' (handcuffs) fairly on I might count the worst of the job over.

It was the spring-time of the year, somewhat raw and gusty, but not by any means bad travelling weather on the whole. Within the hour after receiving my warrant and the needful directions for my route, I was speeding away westwards from Euston; and early in the evening was deposited at a small town a few miles from my destination, the railway going no farther. It was easy for me to procure a conveyance, on my

shewing who and what I was; and I drove over to the county prison, intending to use the vehicle the next day in conveying back myself and capture. The drive was not a very long one; and I arrived in ample time to make all my arrangements with the governor, and to accept of an invitation which he gave me to meet some of the leading tradesmen of the place at the principal inn later on in the evening.

I made a comfortable though somewhat late dinner at the *Wrekin Arms*, and had abundant leisure to smoke a quiet pipe or two before the parlour company began to assemble. My introduction being duly made, I must say that I met with a truly hospitable reception. Vanity apart, I have no doubt that to the tradesmen of the dull place it was no small excitement to find themselves on neighbourly terms with one of the Bow-Street officers, whose fame even now extends all over the country, but who were a good deal more looked up to in the days that I speak of; Dickens having then riveted the attention of the reading public everywhere on the detective and his doings. A pleasant evening was spent, and I had an attentive audience when I told one or two of my best stories; the only thing to complain of—though nobody did complain—was that the sitting was prolonged to rather a late hour, considering the work before me for next morning.

In good time I drove up to the county jail, and leaving my vehicle in charge of a warder who was on the look-out for me, I was quickly in the presence of the governor. We were in the reception-room of the prison; and after a few minutes' talk the order was given for the production of the individual whom I had come to take charge of. Presently he entered the apartment with a lively step and a jaunty air, but which changed in an instant to something very like a look of dismay when he found me with the governor. It was plainly evident that he had guessed my character in a moment, and that he as clearly understood the errand I had come on.

'Here is your discharge Jones, and some things belonging to you,' kindly observed the governor. 'But I am sorry for your sake that I have to tell you this officer is here with a warrant to take you to London; and as go you must, I would earnestly desire you to go quietly, as being best for you in the long-run.'

'I will not give in,' answered Jones sullenly and hoarsely, while there was a twinkle in his eye that foreboded mischief. 'The Bow-Street bobbie,' he continued, 'knows he has no right to grab me inside the prison; let him come outside and try and take me.'

'We know there are a lot of roughs outside, and among them very likely some of your old pals, whom we suspect to be waiting for no good purpose; and therefore,' remarked the governor, 'we think we have a good excuse for stretching the law a bit. Once more I would counsel you

to let the officer put on the bracelets, and spare us the necessity of having to use force.'

Jones's answer was an oath of defiance, which it is not necessary I should write down, and which he had no sooner given utterance to, than, at a nod from the governor, he was in the clutches of two of the warders.

Though a little taken by surprise, the prisoner was not placed at any disadvantage, for he struck out swiftly and strongly. It was a fair up-and-down fight, which admitted of no third party interfering. Now one or other of the warders was down, now the prisoner, but neither party could boast of any decisive advantage. After an ineffectual struggle of some little duration, the two assistants fairly gave in, blown, and quite out of breath.

More defiant than ever, Jones stood as if rather proud of his victory; and I must say the governor looked not a little nonplussed, if not downrightly dismayed. I am a man but little above the middle height, and still tough and wiry; but at the time of which I now speak I had the advantage of being in first-rate training. Jones, as I hinted at the outset, was a big and powerful man, who had gone through many a rough encounter in the course of his criminal career; and it was not, I must confess, without some small misgiving that I made up my mind to encounter him single-handed. To my demand that he should at once submit before more force was called in, he promptly answered by immediately grappling with me.

By birth I am a Devonshire man, and from a part of the county closely bordering on Cornwall. In my younger days I had engaged in many a wrestling-match, and was by no means unacquainted with the Cornish 'hug' and other dodges of those who follow the athletic sport. I soon found that my antagonist was powerful enough, but that he was unskilled. He had much the greater amount of strength; but I had endurance, and could wait my opportunity. After several desperate attempts on his part to get me down, a chance offered, of which I instantly availed myself—a dexterous back-throw, and over he went flat, and with a stunning crash measuring his length on the floor. Before he could recover from the effects of the fall, I was free from his grasp, and he was at our mercy.

In a minute or two he was all right, and holding up his hands, said: 'I give in. You're a somethinged plucky fellow, or you couldn't have done it so neatly.'

The handcuffs were adjusted, and both myself and prisoner bade the governor good-bye; thanks being added on my part for his attentions. When we reached the prison entrance, I did not like the look of things at all. There was a considerable crowd gathered, and among them some very ugly-looking customers, who seemed as if they would not mind a 'scrimmage' in the least. Seeing how things looked, and bent on making sure of my man, I unlocked his right hand, and secured him to my own left wrist. I had not many yards to go to reach my vehicle, and I made a show of meeting the scowling and threatening countenances around me with as easy an air as possible;

and this I found it all the less difficult to do when I discovered in the crowd some of my entertainers of the previous evening, whose presence gave me a certain sense of safety. On reaching the trap, I whisperingly asked the warder in charge of it if he could drive; and being answered in the affirmative, I told him to mount and take the reins. In a moment I had my prisoner in, and off we went at a rattling pace.

When fairly clear of the town, and past all apparent risk of pursuit, I again secured both hands of my involuntary travelling companion, and dismissing the warder, I took the reins myself. Jones sat perfectly quiet, and seemingly quite resigned to his fate. Before, however, we had gone far, he turned abruptly to me and remarked: 'You were in a precious funk when we got outside the prison; and I fancy you had half a mind to call upon the warders to guard you to the trap.'

'No,' I replied; 'I cannot admit that I was in any bodily fear; and besides, there were some of the townsmen in the crowd, who would have come to my help, I have no doubt, had there been occasion.'

'I can tell you, you were in more danger than you mayhap counted on,' rejoined my prisoner. 'There were pals of mine in that crowd who had come for the express purpose of rescue; and had I only but given the word, you would have had a rough time of it before the tussle was over.'

'They would not, however, have got you,' I replied, 'without they had first wrenched off my arm to set you at liberty.'

'Why, they could have got the key and unlocked the darbies—couldn't they?'

'No,' I said. 'I don't think they could have found out where I hid the key; and I'm quite sure they would not have got it if they had guessed where I had it.'

'Why, where on earth did you have it?' asked Jones with evident amazement.

'Well,' I answered, 'just to let you into a little bit of a secret, I may mention that I had the key in my mouth all the while; and I would certainly have swallowed it sooner than let any of your chums get possession of it.'

My prisoner was evidently dumfounded, and had but little more to say during the remainder of the drive. In due time we reached the town where we were to take the rail; but long before the time for the train starting, I drove up to the inn where I had hired the vehicle, and asking the landlord for a private room, I ushered Jones into it.

When we were alone and in no danger of being interrupted, I entered freely into conversation with the poor wretch. I frankly pointed out to him that my duty was not by any means an agreeable one even to myself; but that I would be glad to make things as pleasant as possible for him while we had to bear each other's company. 'Trust me as a man, and behave like a man, you shall have a man's treatment. Act like a dog, and you will have to be treated as a dog,' was the conclusion of my brief but very emphatic address.

He seemed pleased, though in a surly sort of way, I must confess, with what I said to him; but still he looked so far softened as to encourage me to add, that if he would pledge me his word to make no attempt at escape, I would relieve him of

the handcuffs while we were not under public observation, and would treat him as a friend until he passed out of my custody. He did not at once respond to my offer; but after a minute or two of thought, he answered in a hearty tone that had a truthful ring about it: 'I'll do it.' Presently, he added: 'You deserve the pledge; and I'll keep it. I like a fellow that shews pluck, and you have shewn plenty of it to-day, both when you laid me on my back—and it's not many could do that—but also when you marched me through among my pals with such a bold front, and they a dozen to one against you.'

Off came the bracelets in a twinkling; and as there was leisure to spare, I ordered a plain but substantial dinner, early as it was, and took care that there should be plenty of good beer, which I knew would be the greatest treat to my charge. After dinner came a pipe or two, which my man enjoyed prodigiously; and I took care there should be ample store of tobacco for the journey, with a modest flask of spirits to cheer the way; for I had no objection to the good things of life myself, and I meant my companion to have all the comfort I could afford while he remained with me.

I had of course to put on the bracelets again when we marched to the station; and as I was known to the guard, a hint from me was sufficient to procure us a compartment all to ourselves by the simple process of locking us in. The conversation of my travelling companion was not without a melancholy interest, for he was a man who had wasted many years, and some small amount of energy and ability, in an unavailing war against society. I remember thinking at the time what a splendid soldier the fellow would have made in a hot campaign, for he had been noted throughout his career for plenty of dash and enterprise, which had latterly degenerated into something like a sullen ferocity.

We reached London punctual to our time. I handcuffed my man, called a cab, and drove off from the station. As we drove along, it came into my head that I would like to give the poor fellow one more taste of freedom however brief. I told the cabman to pull up at a place where I knew we could be private; and on our getting out, I intimated to my charge that I was going to stretch matters a little in his favour by treating him to another drop of beer and a pipe. Relieving him of the bracelets, I set a tankard before him and handed him my tobacco-pouch. He seemed sensible of the attention paid to him, but looked somewhat bewildered, and was very quiet. When the beer was finished, and the pipe smoked out, he put out his hand, took mine, and burst into tears. 'I've been treated like a wild beast for years,' he exclaimed with bitterness; 'but you are a man, and have shewn the kindness of a brother. I will never forget you!' The fierce outcast of society was subdued. Without the preceding display of force, there would probably have been no ground to work upon; but I think I may venture to say that the succeeding show of confidence and kindness was called for to make the subjection complete.

He held out both hands of his own accord for me to put on the handcuffs, and we drove off to Bow Street. I may just add that I never saw Jones again. He got some very lengthened

term of penal servitude, towards the end of which, as I learned quite accidentally, he died of heart disease.

A GOSSIP ABOUT FEES.

VERY pleasant to a young lawyer is his first fee, the forerunner, in his mind's eye, of many a retainer and refresher in store for him as he works his passage from the bar to the bench. But it is oftentimes weary waiting for that first modest reward, mortgaged, maybe, long before it comes; like the future celebrated Counsellor Scott's half-guinea, which had to be handed over to his Bessy, in accordance with the agreement between them, that he was to take the receipts of the first eleven months of his barristerhood, and give her all he earned in the twelfth month for her own use.

Parsimonious as he is reputed to have been, that was not the only instance of the future Chancellor Eldon cheerfully surrendering the fruits of his labour. While he was still only a rising man at the bar, not overburdened with riches, his hairdresser remarked to him, that if everybody had their own, a certain friend of his, then in indifferent circumstances, would be enjoying the possession of a fine estate. Scott sent the hairdresser to Solicitor Bleasdale to have the facts reduced to writing, and then set about the necessary proceedings to recover the property for its rightful owner; asking the solicitor to keep an account of the fees to which he would be entitled, until the termination of the suit. When it did terminate in the triumph of Scott's client, Mr Bleasdale presented him with a purse containing the whole of the fees due, in gold. Sending for the hairdresser, he congratulated him upon his friend's success, and tossing the well-lined purse to the astonished man, said: 'You have had a good deal of trouble in the affair, so take that purse.'

Another Scott, more famed as a poet than a pleader, had a housebreaker for his first client at Jedburgh, and did his best for the rogue, who in thanking him after the trial, expressed himself as much grieved at being unable to repay him in current coin; but lacking that, gave him two valuable bits of information; assuring him that a yelping terrier inside a house was a better protection against thieves than a big dog outside a house; and that no sort of lock so bothered one of his craft as an old rusty one. Philosophically accepting the inevitable, the author of *Waverley* consoled himself by turning the couplet:

Yelping terrier, rusty key,
Was Walter Scott's first Jeddart fee.

Yet more unsatisfactory was the product of M. Rouher's first brief, held in behalf of a peasant. When the verdict had been given in his favour, that worthy asked his eloquent advocate how much he owed him. 'Oh, say two francs,' was the answer. 'Two francs!' exclaimed the ingrate; 'that's very dear. Won't you let me off with a franc and a half?' 'No; two francs or nothing,' was the counsel's ultimatum. 'Well then,' said his client, 'I would rather pay nothing;' and with a bow, he left M. Rouher to reflect upon rustic simplicity.

To be taken at one's word is not always agreeable, as Daniel Webster found when outwitted by the Quaker. The Clockmaker is responsible for the story, and we must let him tell it. 'This Quaker, a pretty knowin' old shaver, had a cause down to Rhode Island; so he went to Daniel to hire him to go down and plead his case for him; so says he: "Lawyer Webster, what's your fee?" "Why," says Daniel, "let me see. I have to go down south to Washington, to plead the great insurance case of the Hartford Company; and I've got to be at Cincinnati to attend the Convention; and I don't see how I can go to Rhode Island without great loss and fatigue. It would cost you, maybe, more than you'd be willing to give." Pressed to name what he would take, Webster said a thousand dollars. The Quaker well-nigh fainted when he heard this. But he was pretty deep too; so says he: "Lawyer, that's a great deal of money; but I have more causes there. If I give you the thousand dollars, will you plead the other cases I shall have to give you?" "Yes," says Daniel; "I will, to the best of my humble abilities." So down they went to Rhode Island; and Daniel carried the case for the Quaker. Well, the Quaker he goes round to all the folks that had suits in court, and says he: "What will you give me if I get the great Daniel to plead for you? It cost me a thousand dollars for a fee; but now he and I are pretty thick, and as he is on the spot, I'd get him to plead cheap for you." So he got three hundred dollars from one, and two from another, and so on, until he got eleven hundred dollars; just one hundred more than he gave. Daniel was in a great rage when he heard this. "What!" said he, "do you think I would agree to your letting me out like a horse to hire?" "Friend Daniel," said the Quaker, "didst thou not undertake to plead all such cases as I should have to give thee? If thou wilt not stand to thy agreement, neither will I stand to mine." Daniel laughed out ready to split his sides at this. "Well," says he, "I guess I might as well stand still for you to put the bridle on this time, for you have fairly pinned me up in a corner of the fence anyhow." So he went good-humouredly to work and pleaded them all.

Lawyer Dudley, a fellow-countryman of Webster's, was not to be so easily beguiled into giving advocacy gratis. Having to defend a man accused of helping himself to a hog belonging to a neighbour, he succeeded in obtaining an acquittal. 'How can I ever repay you, Mr Dudley?' said the lucky rascal. 'I haven't a cent; accept my thanks.' 'Thanks?' cried the lawyer. 'Send me a side of the pork!'

This reminds us of Abraham Lincoln's story of the hog-stealer who insured his safety by judiciously placing his ill-gotten provender. The theft and the identity of the thief were so incontestably proved, that Mr Lincoln did not see his way to fighting against a conviction, and intimated as much to his client. 'Never mind about that,' said he; 'just abuse them witnesses like the deuce, and spread yourself on general principles.' Mr Lincoln obeyed instructions. The jury retired, and after a short consultation, astonished everybody but the prisoner by declaring him not guilty. 'You see, squire,' he explained, 'every one of the fellows had a piece of them hogs!'

Let things go well or ill with the world in

general, there is never any lack of work for gentlemen learned in the law. Every parliamentary session sees the creation of new offences, the invention of fresh openings for litigation; a game increasing every day in costliness, thanks to the liberal use by solicitors of their clients' money, till one is inclined to echo Uriah Heep's saying, 'lawyers, sharks, and leeches are not easily satisfied.' In taxing the costs in a cause tried at Carlisle, the Master only allowed a counsel's fee of thirty guineas on the brief, with fifteen-guinea refreshers from the second day of hearing. Against this decision the parties concerned appealed, stating that they had paid a Queen's Counsel a retainer of a hundred guineas, and given him a daily refresher of twenty-five guineas, commencing with the first day of the trial. This astonished the court; and one of the judges remarked that he had never before heard of a counsel receiving a refresher for the first day, and could not imagine what he could want with one; whereupon a learned brother suggested that he possibly required it to refresh himself after his long journey. But the court declined to sanction the innovation, or to interfere with the Master's award.

The relative positions of solicitor and counsel would appear to be reversed in France, if a story told lately by the Paris correspondent of a London newspaper be really true. 'We have long had the fable of the lawyer eating the oyster and giving a shell to each pleader, and now we have a pendant. A French lawyer in a separation case pleaded very warmly for his client, who, he said, was literally dying of hunger, and who had two little children. He demanded the immediate aid of two thousand francs, in the name of humanity and in the name of justice, and full of confidence threw himself on the equity of the court. A few days later his client received the following letter: "Madame, I am happy to say we have succeeded in obtaining the provision of two thousand francs. I have handed a thousand francs to your attorney, who has given me a receipt, and I am much obliged to you for the surplus in settlement of fees."

In a case tried at Dunfermline in 1876, two Edinburgh doctors deposed that there was no fixed scale of fees for consulting-physicians, but that the ordinary charge was from two to three guineas per hour; and three local doctors testified that they usually paid a consulting-physician fifteen guineas a visit. From a medical journal we learn that London physicians and surgeons of ordinary repute charge a guinea a visit, two guineas for consultation with another practitioner, one guinea a mile for journeys by road, and two-thirds of a guinea per mile for journeys by rail. Fees for performing operations, or assisting at them, are left very much to the judgment of the individual; but there is a sort of loose understanding that for the great operations involving a risk of life a hundred guineas is a proper average fee; half that amount sufficing in minor cases. Ophthalmic surgeons have made a hundred guineas the current charge for extracting a cataract; fifty guineas that for iridectomy; twenty-five guineas that for strabismus; and so on, with more or less variation, according to the standing of the surgeon and the means of the patient. The principle, however, of charging for a thing not according to its value, but by the presumed depth of the purchaser's purse, is open to question; every

man, be he rich or poor, has an equal right to get his money's worth for his money; whether he has much or little is beside the question. That one practitioner, however, should exact a higher fee than another, is proper enough; we must expect to pay for experience, whether it be our own or that of other people.

A young Parisian lady after being relieved of a tormenting tooth, laid down ten francs in payment. Looking at the fee contemptuously, the dentist asked if that was for his servant. 'No, sir,' responded Madame with a sweet smile; 'it is for both of you.'

A worthy baronet handed his medical adviser his fee rolled up in paper, to find, after the doctor's departure, the proper fee still in his pocket, and a couple of mint lozenges gone. Meeting the defrauded doctor a few hours afterwards, he asked him how he liked his fee. 'Oh, it was very sweet,' was the reply. The next morning saw amends made by the sending of a sovereign and a shilling, with the lines:

The fee was sweet—I thank you for the hint.
These are as sweet; they've both been through the Mint.

The famous Dr Fothergill was once, by his own election, very strangely recompensed for his professional services. A merchant-vessel arriving in the London Docks with captain and crew down with yellow-fever, Dr Fothergill removed the captain to his own house, and succeeded in pulling him through. At first, Fothergill refused to accept any payment at all; but the grateful seaman persisting in rewarding him, he said there was one thing he could do for him—if he were making a voyage to the East and passed through the Straits of Macassar, he should be glad if he would bring him two barrelsful of the earth of Borneo. This the captain readily promised to do. However, when he reached the spot on his voyage out, his heart failed him; and fearing to incur the ridicule of his men, he sailed through the Straits without fulfilling his promise. Returning by the same route, the same thing happened; but after he had left the Straits two hundred miles behind him, his conscience smote him for his ingratitude, and putting the ship's head about, he made for Borneo, and took in the earth. When Fothergill received it, he had a piece of ground prepared by the burning of the surface, and laid the Borneo earth upon it; and in due time had the satisfaction of making the acquaintance of a number of curious plants new to him.

We hear a good deal nowadays of 'payment by results,' a method of remuneration seemingly not unknown in Savagedom. The Utes, says an American authority, have a peculiar and exemplary mode of disposing of medicine-men unlucky in their dealings with disease. Such a practitioner lately contrived to kill two men and one woman. Piat, the chief of the tribe, quietly took down his Winchester rifle and made the doctor's three wives widows; believing that a maladroit medicine-man was better fitted for the happy hunting-grounds than for this mundane sphere.

The Fee family is a large one; but we have occupied too much space with the legal and medical branches to have any left for the rest; still we cannot refrain from quoting from an old song glorifying the only fee that is pleasant

alike to giver and taker, and that leaves the giver no poorer:

'Let's kiss,' says Jane.
'Content,' says Nan;
And so says every she.
'How many?' says Batt.
'Why, three,' says Matt,
'For that's a maiden's fee.'

THE MONTH.

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE audiometer invented by Professor Hughes has been employed, with interesting results, by Dr B. W. Richardson, F.R.S., in testing the hearing of a number of persons. A telephone, microphone, a small battery, coils, and a clock are required in the construction of the instrument. Extending from one of the fixed coils to the other is a graduated bar, from two hundred degrees down to zero, on which the induction coil in the form of a ring may be readily shifted. Place the coil at two hundred degrees and the listener hears the clock ticking surprisingly loud; but from degree to degree as the coil is shifted downwards the sounds decrease, and end at last in absolute silence. The point of silence varies: some persons can hear down to two and a half degrees; others stop at thirty, twenty, or ten degrees, as the case may be, according to their state of health or the sensitiveness of their hearing. Complete silence is necessary during the experiments; and the person under examination should be placed so as not to see the movements of the coil on the graduated scale. It is found in practice that the faintest sounds can be heard only when the decrease is gradual and continuous; and that they are lost by jumps and pauses in the shifting of the coil.

As a rule, the right ear is better than the left; but instances to the contrary have been met with among persons accustomed to exercise their left ear. Some deaf persons fail to remember sounds. A youth was tested who was unable to 'catch all the sounds lying between one hundred and thirty and one hundred and seven degrees until he could remember what he had to listen for;' but by practice he succeeded in identifying all the intervening sounds. These facts, says Dr Richardson, 'seem to indicate that deafness from imperfection of the tympanum or other parts of the organ of hearing may be increased beyond the mere physical failure, either from some lost power of automatic adjustment in the auditory apparatus, or from failure of receptive power in the cerebrum itself, so that the memory rendered imperfect is slow to assist the listener until by exercise of function the readiness is restored.'

The hearing is improved by holding the breath after a deep inspiration; and also by a high barometer. The influence of atmospheric pressure can thus be tested. In his own case, when the barometer is at thirty degrees, Dr Richardson can hear on both sides close down to zero; but below thirty degrees he fails to reach zero on the left side by two degrees. He is of opinion that the audio-

meter will be 'an essential in all physical examinations of men who are undergoing examination as to their fitness for special services requiring perfect hearing, such as soldiers, sentries, railway officials, and the like.' Also in diagnosis; in differentiating between deafness through the external ear and deafness from closure of the Eustachian tube—throat deafness; and in determining the value of artificial tympanums in instances of deafness due to imperfection or destruction of the natural tympanum. In actual practice Dr Richardson finds the best artificial ear-drum to be a small gold cylinder, with which he restored fifty degrees of hearing to one of his patients, who without it could not hear lower on the scale than one hundred and ten degrees.

By attaching a microphone to a sphygmograph, and connecting with an electric battery and a telephone, Dr Richardson has discovered a method for making the movements of the pulse audible. The instrument or sphygmophone, when prepared, is placed on the pulse in the ordinary way, and as soon as it works properly, a distinct series of sounds is heard in the telephone keeping time with the beats of the artery. 'When all is neatly adjusted,' says the Doctor, 'the sounds heard are three in number—one long sound and two short, corresponding to the systolic push, the arterial recoil, and the valvular check. The sounds are singular, as resembling the two words, *Bother it*, and in a quiet room may be heard at some distance. Here then is a new appliance for the medical profession, for although not so good a recorder of the pulse as the sphygmograph, 'it may be made,' as Dr Richardson remarks, 'very useful in class, for illustrating to a large number of students at one time the movements of the natural pulse and the variations which occur in disease.' It may become very useful also in studying the effect of stimulants on the circulation. Let the person under examination drink whisky and in three minutes the pulse gallops, and sounds are heard at times which may be described as screams.

A German professor has arranged a flexible stethoscope in such a way that, as is reported, he can hear the rush of the blood through the capillaries of the skin; also the sounds of muscular contraction, tendinous extension, and the vibration of the long bones. The name of this sensitive instrument is dermatophone.

The Institution of Mechanical Engineers have published a long list of 'subjects' on which they desire to receive papers for reading and discussion at their meetings. Machinery of all kinds, manufacturing operations, and mechanical devices are included. In some instances the refinements of science are required, as in lighting by electricity, and in improvements in the construction and insulation of electric telegraphs, in the transmission of messages, and in telegraphic writing. The Council of the Institution intend to propose that during the present year three hundred pounds shall be expended in promoting 'experimental research on unsettled mechanical questions,' which can hardly fail of acceptance. Three questions have been chosen for a beginning: 'the conditions of the hardening, annealing, and tempering of steel; the corrosion of different classes of steel and iron; and the best form and proportions of riveted joints, both for iron and steel plates.'

It has been ascertained by experience that a rail of Bessemer steel will last nine times as long as an iron rail. About one-third of the railway mileage in this country is laid with Bessemer steel rails, and the economy thereby effected is well pointed out by Mr Price Williams, who states: 'It is estimated that the annual saving in labour alone, in the ordinary maintenance of the lines, which has resulted from the less frequent breaking up of the permanent way where steel rails are now used, is equivalent to the saving of the services of at least a man in every three miles; and this at seventeen pounds per mile will, on ten thousand one hundred and ninety-four miles of single line already laid with steel rails, these being the most heavily worked sections, represent an annual saving of one hundred and seventy-three thousand two hundred and ninety-eight pounds:' to which must be added the much larger sum saved by not having to renew the rails so frequently as in former years.

In a discussion at a meeting of the Institution on Economy in Railway Working, Captain Douglas Galton pointed out that the traffic best deserving of attention by railway companies is third-class traffic. The first class is stationary; the second class declines; but the third class is always growing, and the receipts therefrom could be 'very largely' increased by a further reduction of fares. This was corroborated by Mr Price Williams, who stated that while the profit on first and second class traffic amounted to not more than twenty per cent. the third-class profit might be 'roundly put at seventy-five per cent.' And further: 'Taking the whole of the third-class passengers of the kingdom, the average fare per person was one shilling, and detailed statistics conclusively shewed that ninepence out of that shilling was clear profit to the railway companies. That being so, it would be well for railway managers to consider whether Captain Galton's suggestion of a still further reduction in third-class fares could not be adopted with advantage.'

Professor Osborne Reynolds, President of the Scientific and Mechanical Society of Manchester, in his address to that Society, instanced the past year as one of mechanical improvements and mechanical disasters; the latter, collisions and sinking of ships, and collisions and so-called accidents on railways. He shewed that our achievements in speed have gone far beyond our means of stopping and turning, and that the important problem now is to stop and turn with a readiness and completeness proportionate to our locomotive speed whether on land or water.

The problem as regards stopping a railway train seemed easy of solution: it was known that a single carriage could be suddenly stopped by screwing the brake blocks tight, and so skidding the wheels. But Captain Galton's experiments have proved that it is not the same with a number of carriages, for he discovered that 'by skidding the wheels the brake loses nearly half its greatest power of stopping a train. If the brake is applied with the greatest force short of skidding the wheels, the train will stop in something like half the distance required if the wheels are skidded.'

Professor Reynolds's conclusions on the question of speedy turning of ships so as to avoid a collision were stated in a recent *Month*: it is as much an error to expect the rudder to act on reversal

of the screw of a steamer, as it is to stop a train by skidding the wheels. 'The whole error,' we are told, 'arises from a failure to grasp the circumstances on which the action of the rudder depends. As long, and only as long as the water is rushing backwards past the rudder, will the rudder exert its normal tendency to guide the ship.' The problem in this case is far from being solved.

Niagara is confessedly a 'water-privilege' of the foremost rank for power and grandeur. If that prodigious power could only be transmitted to a distance, what a number of places which are now idle for want of power, might avail themselves of the electric light, and take to spinning and weaving, hammering, sawing, planing, grinding, and other mechanical employments! Surprising statements on the question have been put forth: one, that the cost of an efficient cable would be sixty dollars a foot; another, that the copper deposits of the Lake Superior region, ample as they are, would not suffice for the construction of a cable to transmit the power of the mighty waterfall. In answer to these statements, Professors Thomson and Houston of Philadelphia, whose electro-magnetic researches we have before noticed, tell us that should it be deemed desirable, the total power of Niagara might be conveyed a distance of five hundred miles or more by a copper cable not exceeding one-half of an inch in thickness. For the consumption of one million horse-power, they say that a cable of three inches diameter, if perfectly insulated, would suffice. Of course no single locality could make use of such a vast amount of power; but 'the important fact still remains, that with a cable of very limited size, an enormous quantity of power may be transferred to considerable distances.'

Similar views were expressed by Sir William Thomson in the evidence which he gave a few weeks since before the Select Committee on the Electric Light. 'There would be,' he said, 'no limit to the application of electricity as a motive-power; it might do all the work that could be done by steam-engines of the most powerful description.' And he thought that 'legislation, in the interests of the nation and in the interests of mankind, should remove as far as possible all obstacles, such as those arising from vested interests, and should encourage inventors to the utmost.'

Experiments have been made by the Trinity House on the lighting of buoys with gas, which is manufactured from waste fatty matters or the refuse of oil-works. This gas is passed into the buoys under severe pressure, until a sufficient charge is accumulated to burn for three or four weeks, shewing a bright light by night and day, even in boisterous weather. Here then is a means of lighting an intricate channel, or a passage, or of indicating the position of a wreck, which cannot fail to be useful; and the Trinity Board have ordered the construction of two buoys which will hold compressed gas enough to burn from four to six months. With these, further and, as we may assume, conclusive experiments will be carried on in the estuary of the Thames. The same kind of gas is, we are informed, used for the lighting of railway trains.

The difficulty of raising sunken ships from deep water has led to the invention of the 'gripping camel,' which, when floating over the wreck, lets

down two long arms to which air-bags are attached. The arms are intended to grip the wreck; but the grip is a flexible grip, for air is forced into the bags, which press with increasing force against the sides of the ship, and impart an element of buoyancy. At the same time the lifting power of the floating camel is augmented, and thus the sunken vessel will be lifted. Should it have sunk into a deep bed, a special contrivance sends down a strong jet of water, which, properly directed, soon washes away the heavy pressing sand.

Another method has been made known and discussed at a meeting of the United Service Institution. An iron tower is placed upright by the side of the sunken ship: from the inside of this tower, holes can be bored, into which attachments are fastened. The boring is carried on by means of compressed air, and a man in the tower guides the tool. There may be two or more towers according to the weight to be lifted. When all the attachments are properly made, a floating dock is placed directly above the vessel to be raised; and by alternate pumping out and taking in of water, and taking advantage of the tides, the lifting is accomplished, the dock steams shorewards; the wreck grounds, and is again lifted, until, after a series of repetitions, she is safely placed in the floating dock and carried into port.

That the different colours of the spectrum have an influence on vegetation, has long been known. Plants grown under green glass soon die; under red glass they live a long time, but become pale and slender. Mr Yung of the University of Geneva has placed the eggs of frogs and fishes in similar conditions, and found that violet light quickens their development; and blue, yellow, and white also, but in a lesser degree. Tadpoles on the contrary die sooner in coloured light than in white light. As regards frogs, Mr Yung has ascertained that their development is not stopped by darkness, as some observers have supposed, but that the process is much slower than in the light.

In an account of a simple and sure method of detecting the difference between natural and artificial turquoise, the *Journal* of the Chemical Society states that artificial turquoise is manufactured in at least three countries of Europe. And further, that these imitations possess all the characteristic physical properties of the natural stone in regard to colour, hardness, density, fracture, and appearance under the microscope; even the brown ferruginous inclosures characteristic of some inferior oriental turquoises being added, while a qualitative analysis simply shews the composition of the imitation to be almost identical with that of the true turquoise.

An extra volume of Philosophical Transactions has been published by the Royal Society, containing 'An Account of the Petrological, Botanical, and Zoological Collections made in Kerguelen's Land and Rodriguez during the Transit of Venus Expeditions, carried out by Order of Her Majesty's Government in the years 1874-75.' The two islands thus visited are so peculiar and so little known, that the particulars given by the painstaking naturalists of the results of their adventurous endeavours will be found unusually interesting to general as well as to scientific readers.

A French inventor residing at Sermaze les Bains (Marne), who has been engaged in perfecting his apparatus for applying electricity to agri-

cultural work, has had a public trial of his electric plough. The electricity which propels the plough is not produced by voltaic batteries, but by a powerful gramme-machine which works under shelter, while copper wires, resembling those of the ordinary telegraph, connect it with the plough. The gramme-machine for generating the electricity, though usually worked by a small steam-engine, may be driven, when convenient, by wind or water power. The process—any questions concerning which may be addressed to M. Peronne, Sermaize les Bains, Marne—has been patented, and a Company formed.

A PROVIDENTIAL ESCAPE.

It was in the summer of 1855 that a party of some thirty children, ranging in age from five to ten years, were returning for dinner from the 'District School,' some few miles west of Cincinnati, Ohio, United States, when one of those sudden thunder-storms, so frequent during the hot season in that part of the world, burst on them. The school-house was situated in the midst of a piece of waste land known as 'The School Common,' and before the children had cleared the Common they were nearly wet through, and the terrific lightning and reverberating thunder were quite enough to appal older and stouter hearts; and they had still another quarter of a mile ere they could reach the village.

Although the Common itself could boast of neither tree nor shrub, yet just at its edge stood one of those gigantic oaks which the settler's axe had spared. Beneath its branches the whole party could easily find shelter, and although the storm had been raging some five minutes, its foliage was so dense that the ground underneath it was quite dry. 'Let us get under the oak,' said one little panting mortal. 'Ay, ay!' was echoed and re-echoed by several; whilst all as quickly as possible put the resolution into practice. Just then, one little girl suddenly said: 'We ought not to stay here. I've heard of lightning striking trees and killing any one who happened to be under.' And at last she persuaded them to face the storm once more; nor did they stop again till they had reached the village, where they took refuge.

The storm, furious in its character, soon spent itself; and an hour and a half after, several of the same little people, well fed, and attired in dry clothing, were again making their way to the school, when suddenly, with blanched cheeks, they saw the old oak which had withstood the storms of centuries, still standing certainly, but with several of its branches torn off, others broken and hanging loose, and its huge trunk scorched as though a fire had been kindled all around it. The tree had been struck by lightning. The news of the narrow escape was soon known; and feelings of admiration for the presence of mind displayed by the little girl were mingled with thankfulness for the narrow escape which she and her companions had made.

Perhaps the story may teach those who are unaware of the danger, to avoid the shelter of solitary trees during a thunder-storm. Nothing can be more hazardous, a fact which the death-rates by lightning thus attracted, shew.

KNITTING.

Knitting gaily in the sunshine,
While the fragrant roses blow,
And the light wind stirs the petals,
Till they fall like flakes of snow;
Laughing gladly, glancing shyly,
At the lover by her side—
Saucy dimples, coy confessions,
All a maiden's love and pride;
Weaving in with skilful fingers
Girlish fancies, pure desires,
While the brightness of the future
Flashes through the twinkling wires;
And a young heart's fond ambitions,
Tender hopes, and golden dreams,
Deepen as the sunlight deepens,
With its thousand darts and gleams.

Knitting silent in the shadows,
With a drooping, weary head,
Gazing out into the twilight,
Whence the life and light have fled;
Moving nerveless, languid fingers;
Striving to be bright in vain,
And to still the heart's wild flutter,
Throbbing in its mighty pain;
Working through the silky texture,
All a woman's anguished fears,
Looking out on past and future,
Through a mist of burning tears.
Knitting patient in the twilight,
Quietly bearing all her woe,
While the roses shed their petals
In a fragrant summer-snow!

Knitting fiercely, in the anguish
Of a burning, fiery strife;
Or quietly in the sunlight
Of a calm heart's happy life.
Knitting heavily and slowly,
In life's last fitful hours;
Or skilfully and gaily,
Among the summer flowers!
Weaving in a glorious future;
Or a soul's dumb aching pain,
With the memory of pleasures
That will never come again!

Thus a woman's life is bounded
By the humble, daily task,
Meekly taking up her burden,
Pausing not to strive or ask.
Ah! how many hearts beside us,
Were we not so worldly wise,
Might we see in gentle moments,
Looking out from wistful eyes!
And how often, did we listen,
'Neath a gay and laughing tone,
Could we hear the bitter yearning
Of a strong heart's restless moan!

BEE.

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2d. To insure the return of papers that may prove ineligible, postage-stamps should in every case accompany them.

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